592 it occurs in subcastes as low as washermen,
602 funeral priests and barbers, among whom all
868 tasks are traditionally learnt from the mother's brothers. The handing on of skills in the matri-
592 lineal line goes along with the traditional belief
602 that men of a taravad resemble each other in
828 character, as indeed they often do. Some groups are characterized as bold, and fearless in fighting; others as cautious with money; others as good arbitrators in disputes, friendly to all men;
[827] others as unusually intelligent. Individuals are also expected to resemble their fathers (as well as their mothers) physiologically, for the Nayars are not ignorant of the male role in procreation; but character, which they prize greatly, is rightly thought to be transmitted from men to their sisters' sons.

592 It seems probable that the karanavan's powers
602 were limited by the codification of law which
671 came about during British rule. It is not certain whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the group. During British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a karanavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside on a pension in favour of the next younger man. An inefficient karanavan could moreover be forced by court order to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure; since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin all karanavans are legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members [67] once a year. However,

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family.

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan * caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified.

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *taravâd* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

First birth-day celebration.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *kâranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *kâranavan* of the *taravâd*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *kâranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, "women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

846 [613] [844] [828] which they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 [846] [821] [613] [574] In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next important event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.

852 853 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first [787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]